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1962/11/07

502 SECRET-EYES ONLY

CUT 613A/1

7 November 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing of General Eisenhower, 7 November 1962 - Gettysburg

On Wednesday, November 7th, I called on General Eisenhower to brief him on Cuban developments.

I reviewed in some detail the current situation as outlined in my memorandum of November 3rd and the current developments concerning dismantling and shipping as reported in several CIA Daily Memoranda of the USSR/Cuban crisis, including that of 7 November.

I then reviewed the President's instructions to Governor Stevenson and Mr. McCloy of November 3rd and the highlights of the recent meetings between McCloy, Stevenson, Gilpatric and Kuznetsov, Zorin, etc., as reported in State cables of November 5, 6 and 7 (#1630, #1642, #1660, respectively).

I then summarized Khrushchev's letter to President Kennedy received November 5th and President Kennedy's reply of November 6th.

In summary I advised Eisenhower that it appeared to me that the Soviets had dismantled the ten missile bases known to us and that they were shipping out launching equipment and covered objects that presumably were missiles on a crash basis. They appeared to be filibustering the inspection processes and I expected that by the time Mikoyan returned from Cuba, he would announce that all missiles and related equipment had left Cuba. However no action has been taken on the IL 28s and no indication given that they would be removed and the MIG 21s and the SAM sites with their related radar and communication equipment had not entered into the discussions.

Moreover no provisions had been agreed for on-site inspection and no arrangements had been agreed to guarantee us against the reintroduction of weapons. In this connection I expressed concern over the purpose of leaving the SAM sites intact and operational, indicating that I felt they were there for the purpose of shielding Cuba against future aerial observation by our U 2s, thus permitting the Soviets and Cubans to reintroduce offensive weapons at a future time if they thought this in their interests.

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Eisenhower expressed great concern that we had given Castro a sanctuary by guaranteeing him against invasion and subversive activities and from this sanctuary Castro could increase the tempo of his subversion, insurgency and sabotage operations in the Western Hemisphere. I pointed out that the agreement not to invade was contingent upon certain actions by the Soviets including the removal of weapons under UN verification and the establishment of means of verifying that missiles would not be reintroduced and, since these conditions had not been met, I questioned very much whether we were obligated under our statement of "no invasion". At this point I read to Eisenhower the pertinent sentences in the President's message to Stevenson, McCloy, etc. Eisenhower said he felt the public had a different impression of our commitment, that there was a popular and in his opinion growing impression that we had in effect provided a sanctuary and this was very distressing to a great many who had communicated with him.

Throughout the conversation Eisenhower dismissed as probably unattainable any means of adequate verification by on-site inspection. He expressed some concern over the possibility of hiding some missiles and related equipment in caves or jungle and generally held to the view that as long as Castro existed with a strong alignment with Moscow, a real danger existed in the Western Hemisphere. He therefore suggested as he had in the past, precipitous military action should Castro's conduct and his provocation give us an excuse. Eisenhower is not in favor of air strikes alone. He believes in invasion on a very large scale and thinks if it is done properly, it will all be over in a minimum time and with a minimum of loss. He is convinced that the U.S. will gain rather than lose in world opinion by such positive action and this will be particularly true in the Western Hemisphere. Eisenhower recognizes that invasion must be preceded by air strikes to neutralize Cuban air capabilities but thinks that the time lapse between the strikes and the landing should be minimal.

With regard to his interpretation of public opinion, Eisenhower expressed the view that on the Monday evening of the President's speech there was a great surge of pride that this country was taking a strong stand. Since then the delays and inaction, the public's observation of the U Thant visit to Castro, the Kuznetsov delaying action, the Castro demands and now the Mikoyan visit, all had had their disillusioning and discouraging effect.

In reflecting on Eisenhower's observations, I feel that he had not carefully studied the situation personally, he obviously had not read the Khrushchev/Kennedy exchanges, he has been consumed with

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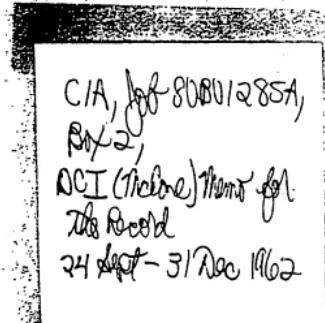
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political matters, and that his views reflected to a very considerable extent the views of fault-finding politicians. For this reason I would not consider the opinions outlined above as representative of the judgment upon which Eisenhower would act if he was in a position of responsibility.

JOHN A. McCONE
Director

JAM/mfb

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1. DCI memorandum of 3 November on missile removal.
2. Instructions of 3 November to Stevenson and McCloy.
3. Meeting ^{between} McCloy and Kuznetsov on 4 November.
4. Stevenson and McCloy three and one-half hour meeting with Soviets on 6 November.
5. Five and one-half hour meeting with Soviets in New York on 6 November.
6. Letter from Khrushchev to Kennedy.
7. Letter from Kennedy to Khrushchev.
8. OCI memorandum on the current situation.

(Documents retained by Mr. Elder)

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